

SOME
A C C O U N T
O F T H E
L A S T S I C K N E S S
A N D
D E A T H
O F T H E

REV. JOHN WESLEY, M. A.

The Righteous shall be in everlasting Remembrance.

Pfalm cxii. 6.

Precious in the Sight of the Lord is the Death of his Saints.

Pfalm cxvi. 15.

D U B L I N:

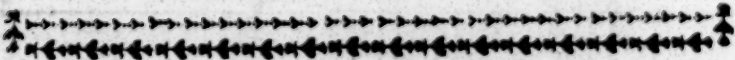
Printed by B. DUGDALE, No. 150, Capel-Street,

M,DCC,XCI.

A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

AS many Friends have desired an immediate Account of the Circumstances relative to the Departure of the late Rev. Mr. WESLEY, the following short but authentic Narrative has been drawn up in Compliance with their Request.

New-Chapel, City-Road, March 8, 1791.



S O M E

A C C O U N T, &c.

ON Thursday the 17th of February, Mr. *Wesley* preached at *Lambeth*, from “*Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life.*” When he came home he seemed very unwell, but on being asked, How he did? only said, he believed he had taken a little cold.

Friday the 18th, Mr. *Wesley* read and wrote as usual, dined at Mr. *Urling's*, and preached at *Chelsea* in the evening from “*The King's business requires haste:*” but was obliged to stop once or twice, and told the people, his cold so affected his voice as to prevent his speaking without those necessary pauses. He was prevailed on to let Mr. *Rogers* and Mr. *Bradford* meet the Classes, and had a high degree of fever all the way home.

Saturday the 19th, reading and writing filled up most of his precious time, though to those that were with him, his com-

plaints (fever and weakness) seemed evidently increasing. He dined at Mrs. *Griffith's*, *Islington*, and while there, desired a friend to read to him the fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of *Job*. He was easily prevailed upon to let Mr. *Brackenbury* meet the penitents. But still, struggling with his weakness, some of us (with hearts full of foreboding fears) saw him ready to sink under it. He rose, (according to custom) early in the morning, but utterly unfit for his Sabbath's exercise: at seven o'clock he was obliged to lie down, and slept between three and four hours. When he awoke, said "I have not had such a comfortable sleep this fortnight past:" the effects were soon gone, and in the afternoon he laid down again, and slept an hour or two: afterwards two of his own discourses on our Lord's sermon on the Mount were read to him, and in the evening he came down to supper.

Monday the 21st, He seemed much better, and though his friends tried to dissuade him from it, would keep an engagement made some time before to dine with Mr. *G—*, at *Twittenham*. Miss *Wesley** and *E. R.* accompanied him: In his way thither he called on Lady *Mary Fitzgerald*: the conversation was truly profitable, and well became a last visit: he prayed in such a spirit and manner, as I believe her Ladyship will

* Mr. *Wesley's* Niece.

will never forget. At *Twittenham* he seemed much better, and the first and last visit to that pleasing family and lovely place, will, I trust, prove a lasting blessing. When we came home he seemed much better, and on Tuesday went on with his usual work, dined at Mr. *Horton's*, *Ijlington*, preached in the evening at the *City-Road* from "*We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith;*" met the Leaders, and seemed better than he had been for some days. Our hopes again revived, and though we feared the little excursion which lay before him might be too much for his strength, yet we flattered ourselves with his longer stay. On Wednesday morning Mr. *Rogers* went with him to *Leatherhead* to visit a family who have lately begun to receive the truth. They had the honour of this almost worn-out veteran in his blessed Master's service, delivering his last public message beneath their roof. O that all that heard may take the solemn warning, and so embrace the blessed invitation he gave them from "*Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near;*" as to meet our dear departed friend at God's right hand. On Thursday he paid his last visit to that lovely place and family Mr. *Wolff's* at *Balaam*, which I have often heard him speak of with pleasure and much affection. Here

Mr. *Rogers* says he was chearful, and seemed nearly as well as usual, till Friday, about break^{fast} time, when he seemed very heavy. About eleven o'clock Mrs. *Wolff* brought him home: I was struck with his manner of getting out of the coach, and going into the house, but more so as he went up stairs, and when he sat down in the chair. I ran for some refreshment, but before I could get any thing for him, he had sent Mr. *R*—— out of the room, and desired not to be interrupted for half an hour by any one, adding, not even if *Joseph Bradford* come. Mr. *Bradford* came a few minutes after, and as soon as the limited time was expired, went into the room: immediately after he came out and desired me to mull some wine with spices, and carry it to Mr. *Wesley*: he drank a little, and seemed sleepy. In a few minutes he was seized with sickness, threw it up, and said, " I must lie down." We immediately sent for Dr. *Whitehead*: on his coming in, Mr. *Wesley* smiled and said, " Doctor, they are more afraid than hurt." I knew not how he judged of our fears, for though my full heart felt as if the Chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof were near at hand to take my Father home, yet I said nothing, nor do I know that any one around him had at that time feelings similar to my own. He lay most of the day,
with

with a quick pulse, burning fever and extremely sleepy. In the evening while pouring out my soul into the bosom of my Lord, telling him all I felt with respect to the church in general, and myself in particular, and trying to plead for my dearest Father's longer stay, that word, "*Father, I will that they whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory,*" seemed so immediately given me from above, that with dear Mrs. Fletcher on a similar occasion, I may say, "From that time my prayer for his life had lost its wings." Saturday the 25th, he continued much the same; spoke but little, and if roused to answer a question, or take a little refreshment, (which was seldom more than a spoonful at a time) soon dosed again. My mind felt much freedom to pray that our Lord would abate the stupor occasioned by the complaint: and I believe, all that knew how the corruptible body pressed down the active, vigorous spirit which for so long a series of years had been its inhabitant, earnestly united to entreat our gracious Lord, that if it was no longer consistent with his will to spare our dear aged Father to go in and out before us, we might at least receive his dying charges, and enjoy the comfort (amidst this awful scene) of hearing him seal with his latest breath, the blessed truths we had

long been accustomed to receive from God through him. We were indulged herein, and on Saturday night the stupor abated, though the fever still continued, but not so violent as before. On Sunday morning with a little of Mr. *Bradford's* help, Mr. *Wesley* got up, took a cup of tea, and seemed much better. Many of our friends were all hopes: yet Dr. *Whitehead* said, he was not out of danger from his present complaints; and though I should have rejoiced in his longer stay, it seemed to me only as an answer to our prayer, and that our Lord was about to indulge us with such a mixture in our cup, as would, at least for the present, soften the approaching stroke. Mr. *Wesley*, while sitting in his chair looked quite chearful, and in a manner we all deeply felt, repeated the latter part of that verse in the Scripture Hymns on "*Forsake me not when my strength faileth.*"

'Till glad I lay this body down
 Thy servant, Lord, attend,
 And O! my life of mercies crown
 With a triumphant end!

Soon after in a most emphatical manner he said, "Our friend *Lazarus* sleepeth." Some friends then present, speaking rather too much to him, he tried to exert himself, but
 was

was soon exhausted and obliged to lie down.

After being quiet awhile, he looked up and said, "Speak to me, I cannot speak." On which Miss *Wesley* and I, (there being no one else in the room,) said, "Shall we pray with you, Sir?" He earnestly replied, "Yes," and while we prayed that if our Father *must* lay this body down, and leave us Orphans, our gracious Lord would let down rays of heavenly glory into his waiting spirit, and pour out on us, and all his children, the promised Comforter, his whole soul seemed engaged with God for an answer, and his hearty Amen thrilled through us. About half after two he said, "There is no need for more, (nor indeed had he strength to speak much) when at *Bristol*,* my words were,

"I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!"

Seeing him very weak, and not able to speak much, I said, "Is this the present language of your heart, and do you now feel as you then did?" He replied, "Yes." I then repeated,

A 5

"Bold

* This refers to an illness with which Mr. *Wesley* was seized at the *Bristol* Conference in the year 1783.

“ Bold I approach th’ eternal throne,
And claim the crown through Christ
my own.”

and added, “ Tis enough. *He*, our precious Immanuel has purchased, has promised all.” He earnestly replied, “ He is all, He is all,” and then said, “ I will go.” I said, “ To joys above: Lord, help me to follow you,” to which he replied, “ Amen.” Soon after, to Miss *Wesley*, who sat by his bed-side, he said, “ *Sally*, have you zeal for God now?” On her replying, “ I wish to love him better, that I may have more,” he said, “ Do you continue to rise early?” After this the fever was very high, and at times affected his head: but even then he was generally either meeting Classes, going to preach, or something that proved that though his head was subject to a temporary derangement, his heart was wholly engaged in his Master’s work. In the evening he got up again, and while sitting in his chair, thinking I suppose of the kind friends he had lately visited, he said, “ What are all the pretty things at *Balaam*, to a dying man!” Speaking of a lady he had only lately known, he said, “ He believed she had real religion: how necessary for every one to be on the right foundation!” He then said,
“ I the

“ I the chief of sinners am,
But Jesus died for me!”

“ We must be justified by faith, and then go on to Sanctification.” Monday the 28th, his weakness increased apace, and his friends in general being greatly alarmed, Dr. *Whitehead* was desirous they should call in another Physician. Mr. *Bradford* mentioned his desire to our Honoured Father, which he absolutely refused, saying “ Dr. *Whitehead* knows my constitution better than any one; I am perfectly satisfied, and will not have any one else.” He slept most of the day, spoke but little; yet that little testified how much his whole heart was taken up in the care of the churches, the glory of God, and the things pertaining to that kingdom to which he was hastening. Once in a low, but very distinct manner he said, “ There is no way into the holiest but by the blood of Jesus.” Had he had strength at the time, it seemed as if he would have said more, (though when asked whether he was in pain, he generally answered, ” No,” and never complained through his whole illness, except once, when he said, that he felt a pain in his left breast, when he drew his breath) Tuesday, March 1st, after a very restless night, he began singing,
“ All

" All glory to God in the sky,
 And peace upon earth be restor'd;
 O Jesus, exalted on high,
 Appear our omnipotent Lord!
 Who meanly in Bethlehem born,
 Didst stoop to redeem a lost race;
 Once more to thy people return,
 And reign in thy kingdom of grace.

When thou in our flesh didst appear,
 All nature acknowledg'd thy birth;
 Arose the acceptable year;
 And heaven was open'd on earth:
 Receiving its Lord from above,
 The world was united to bleſs
 The Giver of concord and love,
 The Prince and the Author of peace."

Here his strength failed; but after lying still awhile, he called on Mr. *Bradford* to give him a pen and ink; he brought them, but the right hand had well nigh forgot its cunning, and those active fingers which had been the blessed instruments of spiritual consolation and pleasing instruction to thousands, could no longer perform their office. Some time after, he said to me, " I want to write:" I brought him a pen and ink, and on putting the pen into his hand, and holding the paper before him, he said, " I cannot." I replied, " Let me write for you Sir:" tell me what you would say? " Nothing," returned he, " but, that
 God

God is with us." In the forenoon he said,
 " I will get up." While his things were
 getting ready, he broke out in a manner
 which, considering his extreme weakness,
 astonished us all, in these blessed words,

" I'll praise my Maker while I've breath,
 And when my voice is lost in death,
 Praise shall employ my nobler pow'rs:
 My days of praise shall ne'er be past,
 While life, and thought, and being last,
 Or immortality endures.

Happy the man whose hopes rely
 On Israel's God; he made the sky,
 And earth, and seas, with all their
 train;
 His truth for ever stands secure,
 He saves th' oppress'd, he feeds the poor,
 And none shall find his promise vain."

Which were also the last words our Re-
 verend and dear Father ever gave out in
 the *City-Road* Chapel, viz. on Tuesday
 evening before preaching from, *We through
 the spirit wait*, &c. But to return to the
 chamber where this great and good man
 met his fate, and which those who had the
 honour of attending, felt was

" Privileg'd beyond the common walk
 Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of
 heaven."

Some

Some of our friends fearing that matters, respecting the meeting of the Preachers at the awful event we now anticipated, were not fully settled: Mr. *Bradford* asked our dying father, if he wished things to continue as determined upon when debated at the last Conference: or if he desired in case of his removal, that any or all of them should be convened? He answered. "No, by no means, let all things remain as concluded at the Conference." When he got into his chair, we saw him change for death: but he, regardless of his dying frame, said with a weak voice, "Lord, thou givest strength to those that can speak, and to those that cannot. Speak, Lord, to all our hearts, and let them know that thou loosest tongues," He then sung,

"To Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
Who sweetly all agree."

Here his voice failed him, and after gasping for breath, he said, "Now we have done—Let us all go." We were obliged to lay him down on the bed from which he rose no more: but after lying still, and sleeping a little, he called me to him, and said "Betsey, you Mr. B——, &c. pray and praise." We knelt down, and truly our hearts were filled with the divine presence: the room seemed to be filled with
God.

God. A little after he spoke to Mr. *Bradford* about the key and contents of his bureau; while he attended to the directions given him, Mr. *Wesley* called me, and said, "I would have all things ready for my Executors, Mr. *Wolff*, Mr. *Horton*, and Mr. *Marriot*," here his voice again failed; but taking breath he added, "Let me be buried in nothing but what is woollen, and let my corpse be carried in my coffin into the Chapel." Then, as if done with all below, he again begged we would pray and praise. We called up several friends that were in the house, and all kneeled down, Mr. *Broadbent* prayed, at which time Mr. *Wesley's* fervor of spirit was visible to every one present; but in particular parts of the prayer his whole soul seemed to be engaged in a manner, which evidently shewed how ardently he longed for the full accomplishment of our united desires. One thing we could not but remark; that when Mr. *Broadbent* was praying in a very expressive manner, that if God was about to take away our father and our head to his eternal rest, he would be pleased to continue and increase his blessing upon the doctrine and discipline which he had long made his aged servant the means of propagating, and establishing in the world: such a degree of fervor accompanied his loud *Amen*, as was every way expressive of
of

of his soul's being engaged in the answer of our petitions. On rising from our knees, he took Mr. *Broadbent's* hand, drew him near, and with the utmost placidness saluted him, and said, "Farewell, farewell." Mr. and Mrs. *Rogers*, Mr. *Horton*, &c. &c. drew near the bed side, and he took the same affectionate leave of them all. The next pleasing awful scene was the great exertion he made in order to make Mr. *Broadbent* (who had not left the room) understand that he fervently desired, a Sermon he had written on the Love of God should be scattered abroad, and given away to every body. Something else he wished to say, but alas! his speech failed, and those lips which used to feed many were no longer able (except when particular strength was given) to convey their accustomed sounds. A little after, Mr. *Horton* coming in, we hoped that if he had any thing of moment on his mind, which he wished to communicate, he would again try to tell us what it was, and that either Mr. *Horton*, or some of those who were most used to hear our dear Father's dying voice would be able to interpret his meaning; but though he strove to speak, we were still unsuccessful: finding we could not understand what he said, he paused a little, and then with all the remaining strength he had, cried out, "The
best

best of all is, God is with us;" and then, as if to assert the faithfulness of our promise-keeping Jehovah, and comfort the hearts of his weeping friends, lifting up his dying arm in token of victory, and raising his feeble voice with a holy triumph not to be expressed, again repeated the heart-reviving words, "The best of all is, God is with us." Some time after, giving him something to wet his parched lips, he said, "it will not do, we must take the consequence; never mind the poor carcase." A little after this seeing Mr. *Rogers*, and Mr. *Rankin* stand by his bed side, he asked, "Who are these?" (his sight now almost gone preventing him from distinctly knowing his most intimate friends, except in a peculiar light, or by their voice,) being informed who they were, Mr. *Rogers* then said, "Sir, we are come to rejoice with you: you are going to receive your crown." "It is the Lord's doing, he replied, and marvellous in our eyes." On being told Mrs. *Wesley** was come he said, "He giveth his servants rest." He thanked her as she pressed his hand, and affectionately endeavoured to kiss her. On wetting his lips he said, "We thank thee, O Lord, for these and all thy mercies: bless the Church and King: grant us truth and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord for ever and ever!" At another time,
"He

* Mr. Charles Wesley's Widow.

“ He causeth his servants to lie down in peace.” I replied, “ They lie down in peace indeed who rest in our Redeemer’s bosom. Lord, help us to rest in him, and then rest with you in glory.” To which he replied, “ Amen.” Then pausing a little, he cried, “ The clouds drop fatness!” and soon after, “ The Lord is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge!” He then called us to prayer. Mr. *Broadbent* was again the mouth of our full hearts, and though Mr. *Wesley* was greatly exhausted by these exertions, he appeared still more fervent in spirit. Several of his relations being present, Mr. *Broadbent* particularly thanked God for the honour he had conferred upon the family, and then fervently prayed that the glory might never be tarnished, nor they want a man to minister before the Lord to the latest generations: at the end of which petition our dying father discovered such ardency of desire that the prayer might be answered by repeating his Amen, as deeply affected all present. These exertions were however too much for his feeble frame, and most of the night following, though he was often heard to attempt to repeat the psalm before-mentioned, he could only get out,

“ I’ll praise—— I’ll praise!”——

On

On Wednesday morning, we found the closing scene drew near. Mr. *Bradford*, his faithful friend, and most affectionate Son, prayed with him, and the last word he was heard to articulate was, " Farewell!" A few minutes before ten, While Miss *Wesley*, Mr. *Horton*, Mr. *Brackenbury*, Mr. and Mrs. *Rogers*, Dr. *Whitehead*, Mr. *Broadbent*, Mr. *Whitfield*, Mr. *Bradford*, and E. R. ^{Acme} were kneeling around his bed; according to his often expressed desire, without a lingering groan, this man of God gathered up his feet in the presence of his brethren! We felt what is inexpressible: the ineffable sweetness that filled our hearts as our beloved Pastor, Father, and Friend entered his Master's joy, for a few moments blunted the edge of our painful feelings on this truly glorious, melancholy occasion. As our dear aged Father breathed his last, Mr. *Bradford* was inwardly saying, " Lift up your heads, O ye gates; be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and let this heir of glory enter in." Mr. *Rogers* gave out

" Waiting to receive thy spirit,
 Lo! the Saviour stands above:
 Shews the purchase of his merit,
 Reaches out the crown of Love "

One then said, " Let us pray for the mantle of our *Elijah*;" on which, Mr. *Rogers* prayed

prayed in the spirit for the descent of the Holy Ghost on us, and all who mourn the general loss the Church Militant sustains by the removal of our much loved Father to his great reward. Even so. Amen.

E. R. *Shea*

N. B. It is judged necessary by the Preachers in London and earnestly recommended to their Brethren the Preachers and the Societies in their respective Circuits, that in consideration of our late great Loss, Wednesday the 6th of April be kept as a Day of solemn fasting and prayer, in order to humble ourselves before the Lord, and implore the continuance of his mercies towards us. It is also judged needful that Friday the 1st of July be kept as another Day of solemn fasting and prayer for all the Methodist Societies in order to implore the Blessing of God on the ensuing Conference.

JAMES ROGERS,
JOHN BROADBENT,
THOMAS RANKIN,
JOSEPH BRADFORD,
GEORGE WHITFIELD.

An

An EXTRACT from the ARGUS, a
London Paper, 10th of *March*.

THE public have been amply gratified for these few days past, by the exhibition of a spectacle every way deserving their notice. Every day produces instances of mortality, but it requires the revolution of a century at least to produce a WESLEY.

Nearly three-fourths of a century were occupied by his voluminous writings and unexampled labours: and if we take it into the account that he was always a stranger to repose after *four* in the morning, the time he *really* lived was more than a century when compared with the lives of others.

That which was mortal of this amiable and venerable Divine has been exposed to view ever since Wednesday last. Death visited him with a smiling aspect, and left evident traces of sweetness and composure on his countenance. The tenement of clay he left behind appeared *super-human*.—As there was nothing but joy and peace in his death, his body participated of the purity of his spirit, and no corpse ever discovered smaller signs of corruptibility. This being the case, his zealous friends wished the whole world to see his last remains, and tens of thousands were abundantly gratified with the sight.

The narrow boundaries of a Chapel were supposed to be inadequate for the admission of the vast multitudes who would flock to his funeral, which was originally fixed for ten yesterday morning. The executors therefore came on Tuesday night to the prudent resolution of having him interred very early. Notices were therefore dispatched so late as eleven o'clock to the different mourners, that they might attend at his House in the *City-Road*, at four o'clock, which they accordingly did: and his remains were committed to the earth with the utmost solemnity about six.

The funeral service of the Church of England was pathetically delivered by a Clergyman and a Graduate long in his connection, attached to him by an affinity of amiable qualities, as well as from the conviction of the purity of his procedure. No alteration whatever was made in the service, except when he read that solemn depositure—
“For as much as it hath pleased Almighty God to take unto himself the soul of our dear brother,” &c. &c. he substituted the epithet *father*, in its stead, which had a visible effect

effect upon the audience; these were more numerous than could have been expected, considering the sudden change, and the late hour in which it was determined.

Three Coffins were used on this occasion—that which contained the body, cloathed with his sacerdotal robes, being placed in one of lead, with an English inscription. The outer case was covered with black cloth, as plain and neat as possible, thus inscribed—

JOANNES WESLEY, A. M.

Olim. Soc. Coll. Lin. Oxon.

Ob. 2do. die Martii, 1791.

An. Æt. 88.

The funeral was conducted with great order, solemnity and propriety; neither coach, hearse, feather nor escutcheon.

The pulpit and galleries of the Chapel in the *City-Road* are hung with black cloth, as are the pulpits of five others of his Chapels in the metropolis.

The affection and zeal of his Societies in various parts of the world will, we hope, be manifested by a steady uniform adherence to that pure and pious system of religious doctrine and sanctity of behaviour, which was his constant and ardent endeavour to establish.

The property he left behind consisted entirely in literary works. His Chapels are left to promote the good cause in which he was engaged. His ready cash did not amount to five pounds, and he had no fund but in the liberality of his people—though he had as many opportunities as any man of amassing considerable wealth.

F I N I S.

